Socio-economic Development of Lodha Tribe in West Bengal: A Study of '*Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi*' Programme in the Context of Landlessness

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Access to land in an agriculture-based rural economy is important because land is a primary means of production. This land can be used as collateral to access financial resources and extension services. It can also be rented or sold to generate income directly. Land ownership is viewed as critical for increased productivity, improved household food security and nutrition and enhanced family income. Social distribution of land in a village economy determines the economic position, social status and power relations between different social groups. On the other hand, landlessness is considered as the greatest predictor of poverty (World Bank, 1997). This is the root cause of poverty in the rural context where livelihood of the people is mainly based on land. Lack of access to even a small plot of homestead land puts a family in extreme vulnerability because of lack of identity, social status, access to government services and access to subsistence.

2. CONTEXTUALIZING THE PROBLEM:

Pro-poor distribution of land following the principle of distributive justice has remained in the priority agenda of the national government since independence, keeping in view the increase in agricultural productivity and alleviation of rural poverty. Land being the state subject, most Indian states enacted land reform laws aimed at broadening access to rural land. These land reform laws have by and large enabled redistribution of ceiling surplus land and regulation or prohibition of landlord-tenant relationship. But, it has failed to bring desired outcome. Studies show that these efforts have very marginal impact in broadening access to rural land. Even in most successful states like West Bengal, Kerala and Karnataka the problem of rural landlessness remained substantial.

West Bengal is widely recognized as one of the most progressive states in redistributive land reform, and one of the more successful implementers of national agenda of land reforms. Enactment of West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 and later on strong political will of the government to implement its provisions played instrumental role in this front. In late 1970s, when the Marxist Left Front-led government came into power, they launched '*Operation Barga'*, a statewide effort to document and enumerate West Bengal's '*bargadars*' (sharecroppers), thus providing them with greater tenure security under the law. West Bengal was also at the forefront among states in terms of effective distribution of ceiling-surplus land, having taken control of and allocated 1.04 million acres of land to 2.54 million land-poor households by 2001 (Hanstad & Brown, 2001).

In spite of several efforts by the state, landlessness remained substantial. According to the National Sample Survey Organization's 59th round survey report, 427,000 households in the state were landless and homesteadless (NSSO, 2003). Against this backdrop, the government launched a homestead land allocation program, '*Chas-O-Basobaser-Janyo-Bhumidan-Prakalpo*' (Cultivation and Dwelling Plot Allotment Scheme) in 2006. Under the program, the government purchased tracts of land and provided homestead plots to landless rural agricultural labourers households. The maximum size of each plot was 16 decimal. These homestead plots were intended for building a dwelling unit, cultivating a small vegetable garden, planting fruit or timber yielding trees, and raising livestock.

Homestead plot allocation programme in the state has witnessed several changes in due course of time. Some amendments were made in 2009 and again major changes took place when Trinamool

Congress led government came in to power in 2011. The programme was withdrawn and a new programme named as 'Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi' (NGNB) or 'My Home, My Land' was launched. Major objective of the programme is to provide homestead plots to poorest landless and homsteadless agricultural labourers, rural artisans and fishermen. The program is mainly implemented by the Department of Land and Land Reforms, with major roles for the Block Development Office and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). As per the provision of the programme, government purchases land suitable for homestead development at the market price to be distributed to landless labourers, artisans and fishermen for settling them in a cluster of minimum ten families. In addition to the allotment of purchased land, there is also provision for distribution of ceiling surplus vested vacant land or regularization of encroached government vested land.

Under the programme, an eligible family is provided with maximum five decimal of land for making dwelling units and utilizing rest of the land for livelihood augmentation. Women headed households from Scheduled Tribes (STs) are given first priority, women headed households from Scheduled Castes (SC) are given second priority, then minority communities, and finally those belonging to any other caste. Next priority is given to male-headed households in the same order with titles in joint names of wife and husband. There is a programme implementation committee at the block level, called Land Purchase and Land Distribution (LPLD) Committee to ensure certain quality aspect of land distribution. After selection of the households in order of priority, suitable land is identified, purchased and allocated to those families. Government provides support for relocation of those families in a cluster by providing basic infrastructure support through convergence with existing other government schemes and programmes. Apart from providing basic amenities, under the convergence component of the programme, the government provides agricultural extension services for improvement of their life and livelihood by leveraging resources from different government departments (GoWB, 2011).

Since November 2011 till March 2017, 2,19,373 households have been benefitted under the state flagship programme. The programme has always put gender focus. It provides for issuing 'patta' (land titles) in the name of women either individually or jointly with their husbands. An effort has been made under this programme to hand over Record of Rights (RoR) to the beneficiary households simultaneously with patta. Responsibility is entrusted with the block administration to ensure physical possession of the homestead plot received in paper by the beneficiary households. Scheduled Tribe families have always been considered priority target group of the programme. Women headed families among the tribes are in the top most priority among all beneficiaries of the programme.

Land & Land Reforms Department, Government of West Bengal conducted a survey for enumeration of landless and homestead less households on its own in 2012-13 and identified 2,91,168 such households. So, around 75 percent of the identified eligible landless poor families received *patta* for homestead plots within this time period. District wise allocation of homestead plots through distribution of land titles along with eligible identified landless households is shown below (Table 1).

Table 1: District wise distribution of patta under NGNB Scheme in West Bengal

Sl. No.	Districts	No. of eligible landless households identified	Total patta distributed since 2011
1	Bankura	6335	6000
2	Barddhaman	37870	24057
3	Birbhum	15069	14970
4	Darjeeling	16530	11058
5	Howrah	7670	3830
6	Hugli	17194	7548

7	Jalpaiguri	11400	11400
8	Coochbehar	12304	9568
9	Malda	22453	12082
10	Paschim Medinipur	24540	20207
11	PurbaMedinipur	9762	9103
12	Murshidabad	10593	8053
13	Nadia	20778	18786
14	Purulia	11179	8822
15	North 24 Parganas	13294	6669
16	South 24 Parganas	31629	25090
17	Dakshin Dinajpur	5266	5266
18	Uttar Dinajpur	10370	10261
19	Alipurduar	6932	6603
	TOTAL	2,91,168	2,19,373

(Source: Land & Land Reforms Department, Government of West Bengal)

Scheduled Tribes constitute 8.6% of the total population of the country (Census, 2011). Most of the tribal communities in India are characterized by different social and economic problems like tribal land alienation, poverty and indebtedness, health and nutrition, and education. Landlessness among tribes is viewed as the root cause for their socio-economic backwardness. The history of land alienation among the tribes began during British colonialism in India when the British interfered in the tribal region for the purpose of exploiting the tribal natural resources. Coupled with this, tribal lands were occupied by moneylenders, Zamindars and traders by advancing them loans etc. Constant exploitation over their natural resources ruined the livelihood of these forest dependent people and turned them displaced and destitute historically.

Later on, post-independence several initiatives by the government have improved their situation to a great extent. Land reforms policies by the government have always given priority to tribal communities. In spite of that, landlessness among tribal remain substantial in the country. There are 58,61,872 tribal household (3.27%) in the country who do not possess any land (SECC, 2011) other than homestead plots. There is 5.8% tribal population in West Bengal which is 5.1% of total tribal population of the country (Census, 2011). They are considered to have benefitted most from the traditional land reforms initiatives of the state government. Despite all that efforts, a large section of the tribes remained landless and homesteadless in the state which cannot be ignored. Out of 11,35,907 tribal households in the state, 5,71,141 households (50.28%) do not possess any land other than homestead plots (SECC, 2011).In India, there are only 119,93,000 tribal household who are having operational holdings of only 182,94,000 hectare of land and 53.9% of them are marginal holders (possessing less than one hectare). In case of West Bengal, only 3,97,000 hectare of land are operationally held by 5,82,000 tribal households and out of this number of households 83.95% are marginal holders (GoI, 2015).This poor status of land holding by Scheduled Tribes is also manifested through poverty scenario. In rural West Bengal, in 2011-12, 50.1% tribal population is still living below poverty line whereas the national figure is 45.3% (GoI, 2017).

The Lodhas, once treated as Criminal Tribe, later as De-notified Community and Primitive Tribal Group and now a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) of West Bengal are the largest PVTG in the state having 84,966populations (1.9% of total tribal population in the state as per census, 2001). They are mostly concentrated in Paschim Medinipur (including Jhargram) district having 60,206 populations in 15,282 households (DHDR, 2011). A large number of Lodhas are also found in the East Singbhum district of Jharkhand and the Mayurbhanj district in Odisha. In the first census of India after Independence (1951), their total population was 8,346 only in West Bengal. In the same

Census the total number of Lodhas in erstwhile Midnapore was 7,040, that is 84.35 percent of the then total population of Lodhas in West Bengal (Mitra, 1953). As per the Census of 1981, the total population of the Lodhas was 16,534 (Mandal *et al*, 2002). At present, the Lodhas do not live exclusively in the forest covered areas, but have spread out in other deforested regions where they are found to be working as agricultural and non-agricultural labourers or cultivating their own farmland (Panda and Guha, 2013). But their main economy is still based on collection of minor forest products, such as leaves for preparing leaf plates for sale. The Lodhas are traditionally gathering-hunting tribe, and so they are not so adept in agriculture. But in Jungle areas, they rear 'tusser' cocoon, collect minor forest produce, 'kendu' leaves for preparing 'bidi' i.e. country cigar, and Sal leave for making stitched plates, for eating and serving food. They also still today prefer to catch snakes or lizards and sell their skins. In this way, we still find pre-agricultural economy among them (Bhowmick, 1985).

NGNB programme is aimed at reducing absolute landlessness and addressing rural poverty. Scheduled Tribes in general and Lodha community in particular are considered to be worst affected by landlessness and thus they have always been on the priority target group of the programme since beginning. In this context, it becomes necessary to know how far the programme has catered to the need of this particular vulnerable community. Whether the issues of their landlessness and related vulnerabilities have been taken care of seriously? The follow up questions coming up after several years of implementation are whether this land titles have enabled these tribal households to reap benefits from other schemes through convergence component of the programme. And ultimately, the question arises whether the programme has really helped these primitive tribal groups in their social and economic upliftment.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Landlessness is viewed as the best indicator of poverty in agriculture based rural economy like India, finding the incidence of poverty to be 68 percent among landless wage earners (World Bank, 1997).The Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011 report considers landlessness as a major indicator of rural poverty perhaps for the first time. The figures indicate that almost 56 percent of the rural population lives without any ownership of land (GoI, 2011).In rural India an estimated 15 million extremely poor families are landless (RDI, 2009).According to National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) data (2003-04) about 41.63 percent of households do not own land other than homestead. On the other hand, India Rural Development Report, 2012-2013 shows that nearly half of all Indians still depend on land and land-based activities for their livelihoods. The fact of dependence of half of Indian population on land and land based livelihood while 56 percent of them without access to land is definitely a matter of grave concern for policy makers and thinker (GoI, 2014).

Absolute landlessness (without even having a homestead land) puts a household into extreme vulnerability. These households lack identity and social status and fall into the trap of prolonged poverty and indebtedness. Either they are living in other's place or government vested land without any legal rights. Constant fear of eviction forces them to be suppressed by other and compromise with social realities. They do not have bargaining power in the labour market which is a stumbling block in the way of their increasing family income. This condition leads to lack of nutrition, especially for children and women, lack of education and other basic amenities needed for the survival of the entire family. As per NSSO 70th round report, out of 156 million rural households in India, there are 7.41 percent such absolute landless households, which is 6.55 percent in case of West Bengal (NSSO, 2013).

Landlessness among Scheduled Tribes is the root cause of their social and economic backwardness. The condition of landlessness gives birth to other socio-economic problems like indebtedness, malnutrition, and lack of access to health services and education. As per NSSO 70th round report, there are 9.41 percent Scheduled Tribe households in India who do not own any land practically i.e. absolute landless (NSSO, 2013). As per Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011, out of 11, 35,907 tribal households in the state, 5,71,141 households (50.28%) do not possess any land other than homestead plots. So, it is evident that in spite of several pro-tribal land reforms initiatives, landlessness among tribe has remained substantial in the state. Lodhas among the tribes are semi-nomadic and they belong to PVTG category. Apart from having problem of landlessness, their apathy and limited capacity in agricultural activities and more dependency on forest put them in extreme vulnerability.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Very few literatures are available on the issues of homestead land allocation programme and on the issues of tribal landlessness. Most of the literatures available on tribal issues revolve around anthropological aspect and other social development programmes like health, education etc. Again very limited number of literature is available on land reform programme and its impact on tribal development. So, before proposing for a research on this particular issue, by and large, three kinds of literatures have been reviewed so far. Firstly, on homestead plot allocation and its different aspects; secondly, on tribal landlessness from different government reports and national level survey reports; and thirdly, on situations of tribes, especially Lodhas in West Bengal and different social development programmes meant for them.

A good number of researches have been conducted internationally and very few research nationally on allocation of homestead plot as a tool of poverty reduction and its social and economic benefits. In many development literatures, 'homestead plots' are also referred as 'micro-plots', 'home gardens', 'kitchen gardens' and 'house-and-garden plots'. 'Homestead Plots' are defined as 'plots of land comprising one acre or less that include or are located near the household's house' (Mitchel, Hanstad and Nielson, 2009). Intensive gardening and other productive use of homestead plots have developed independently in natural course in developing countries like India, Indonesia, tropical Pacific islands, Caribbean and various parts of tropical Latin America and Africa. When a homestead plot is optimum in size and suitable to erect basic shelter and engage in vegetable gardening, trees cultivation, tendering small scale livestock, home-based business, and other income generating activities, these small plots immediately diversify livelihood strategies and provide a cushion for the most vulnerable populations against economic and environmental shocks. Such micro-plots can offer multiple benefits to a poor family including enhancing family nutrition, increasing family income, providing physical security, serving as a vehicle for generating wealth, and securing the family's status within the community (Mitchel, Hanstad and Nielson, 2009).

A typical homestead plot has several common characteristics across the geographies as follows.

a) They include household's residence or are located nearby the residence.
b) They usually contain a garden and are used for keeping poultry and other livestock. Garden again containing high diversity of plants.
c) Production on the micro-plot is typically supplemental to rather than the primary source of family income or consumption.

d) The area is typically protected by fencing reducing the risk of crop damage from animals or loss of assets to theft.
e) Micro-plot is a support for a poor family for entering into economic activities at any level as it requires very small economic resources. (Brownrigg, 1985; Vasey, 1985; Marsh, 1998).

A number of studies from a variety of international settings indicate that homestead plots can confer multiple important benefits, in terms of food, income, status, and economic security to a poor family. The evidence confirming the potential benefits of homestead plots comes from a variety of diverse settings, including Indonesia (Netting, 1993), Russia (Uzun, 2001), Cuba (Sinclair and Thompson, 2001), and South India (Franke and Chasin, 1994). When rural families have secure access to and control over land, they are likely to grow more food and see their incomes rise. Land security for the rural poor families can mean food security as well as social security.

Rural Development Institute (Landesa), USA and University of Agricultural Science, Bangalore conducted a study in Karnataka in 2001 regarding significant benefits yielded from micro-plots. The major focus of the study was on determining optimum size of the plot and finding out non-housing benefits derived from micro-plot. The study found that benefit derived from the plot increased proportionally with the increase in plot size. It also revealed that functionally landless, agricultural labourer families that own a house plot typically derive substantial non-housing benefits from the plot including increased nutrition, income, status, wealth generation, and access to credit (Hanstad*et al*, 2008).

Rural Development Institute (RDI) conducted a similar study as above in West Bengal in 2001 (Hanstad and Lokesh, 2002). The objective of the research was to explore the extent to which land-poor rural households were or might be deriving non-housing benefits from homestead plots and if such benefits were related to plot size. The authors' research focused on households that owned a homestead plot, but owned little or no agricultural land. Within this category, two types of households were sought: (1) households who had received their homestead land through government allocation, either through the land reforms or other schemes; and (2) households who had received benefits from rural housing schemes. The study found that most households accrued important non-housing social and economic benefits from their homestead plots. More interestingly, this study reveals that those benefits increased with small increases in homestead plot area beyond the footprint of the house, but then several benefits stopped increasing or even decreased as plot size increased beyond about 3,000 square feet (0.07 acre or 7 cents).

International Food Policy and Research Institute (IFPRI) conducted a study on land allocation and its impact on food security in West Bengal during 2010-12. The study was carried out among the CDPA and NGNB beneficiaries with women focus but without any reference to any particular marginal communities like Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes. The study viewed women's participation in decision making as an intermediate outcome of future food security. It concludes that there is no such immediate impact on current food security but land allocation programme has led to significant and positive impact on intermediate outcomes like, tenure security, use of credit for agricultural production, investment in agricultural production and women's participation in decision making which are expected to lay the foundation for future food security (Santos*et al*, 2014).

Landlessness among tribes dates back to the era of British colonialism when alienation of tribal land pitched into practice. Gradually the situation worsened further. Independent India adopted land reform policies where this particular issue was highlighted. Most of the states promulgated laws and policies to restore their situation and bring parity in land holding thus reducing landlessness among tribes.

According to the 1961 census, there were 3.15 crore agricultural labourers in the country out of whom 0.33 crore (10.47%) belonged to Scheduled Tribes. Further, as per the 1961 census, 54.71 percent of the Scheduled Tribes cultivators had holding below five acres of land. Long back, Murdia's work (Murdia, 1975) on secondary data reviewed and analyzed the situation of land holding among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes in the country. It showed that 29.11 percent tribal household in the country owned less than 2.4 acres of land whereas in case of West Bengal it was 44 percent. That work concluded that in spite of various legislative and executive measures adopted by various states for the allotment of land to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, the actual benefit derived by these communities have been relatively small. This study did not reflect much on landlessness, rather analyzed comparative land holdings.

Tribal people mostly live in rural areas and derive their livelihood by working on land. In spite of that fact, they are most deprived of land. Ninth Five Year Plan Draft Report (1997-2002) revealed that 90 percent of the Scheduled Tribe households were landless, without any productive assets and sustainable employment opportunities. The study of Mohanty (2001) finds that the incidence of landlessness is pronounced among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, the bulk of whom are agricultural labourers with miniscule holdings or are sharecroppers or other types of insecure tenants. Poor land ownership accounts for their perpetual poverty and makes them vulnerable to social injustice and exploitation. Based on 13 major states, this study shows that even after 50 years of planned initiatives and policy measures, there has not been substantial improvement in the landholding status of scheduled groups, and in some states, it has declined further.

Later on, National Centre for Advocacy Studies (NCAS), Pune and Ekta Parishad jointly conducted a study in 2002 in Madhya Pradesh on the issues of land reforms, landlessness and land alienation with particular reference to Scheduled Caste and Tribes. The study reveals that 70.87 per cent of the tribal respondents had land titles without having possession and 26.63 per cent had possession of the land without titles. This indicates that, in spite of land reforms, the objective of equitable land distribution has remained a distant dream (NCAS, 2002).

Very few literatures are available on the issues of tribal landlessness in the context of West Bengal. One such study was conducted by D. K. Singharoy though the core issue was economic deprivation and socio-cultural marginalization of tribal peasantry in the state. The study was conducted in three villages of West Bengal i.e. Khanpur in Balurghat block of Dakshin Dinajpur, Shalgheria in Gopiballavpur block of Paschim Medinipur and Sabdullajot of Naxalbari block in Darjeeling districts which have substantial concentration of tribal population. With reference to NSSO data 1992 this study mentions that 14.5 percent of the tribal population are landless, 70.65 percent are marginal and 11.3 percent are small cultivators thus landless, marginal and small cultivators constitute 96.5 percent of tribal population of the state. This study finds that out of all tribal household of these three villages, 50 percent of Sabdollajote, 59 percent of Khanpur and 90 percent of Shalgheria have received either a piece of surplus vested land, Record of Rights as sharecroppers or both. In spite of that, it concludes that contemporary development initiatives have only partially affected the economic life of the tribal peasantry as they have largely remained the passive recipients of the development initiatives (Singharoy, 2004).

Lodhas are originally hunting-gathering community. Before independence, they were treated as 'Criminal Tribe'. After independence, the Government of India repealed the Criminal Tribes Act in 1952 and they were classified as 'de-notified tribes'. Even after de-notification as criminal tribes, the Lodhas continue to suffer from the social stigma and the non-tribal neighbors who still behave unsympathetically towards them. Over the decades, the Lodhas gradually changed their occupation

from hunting gathering to agriculture as an alternative means of livelihood owing to deforestation (Danda, 2002). P.K. Bhowmick, Professor of Anthropology from Calcutta University has done classic, nuanced and ground breaking work about the tribes, especially Lodhas in West Bengal. He described the situation of tribes, their characteristic features in tune with regional climate and their social and economic problems. He mentioned about the problem of landlessness among tribes. He also raised another issue of their landlessness with regard to land alienation by money lenders and keeping them entangled with indebtedness. Different government programmes meant for the tribes in general and Lodhas in particular during that period have been mentioned by him (Bhowmick, 1963, 1981, 1985).Some other important works on this tribe were done by Sarkar (1974), Ray (1967), Gupta (1976), Das and Banerjee (1964).

Since the Lodhas are regarded as a marginalized and economically backward tribes, both the Central and the State Governments have allocated funds under various development schemes to improve the socio-economic condition of the tribe since Independence. Panda and Guha (2013) conducted a field based study in recent past to make an assessment of the ground realities of the situation regarding the utilization of the development inputs given to the Lodhas in three administrative blocks viz., Binpur-II, Nayagram and Narayangargh of Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal. Their objective was tomake an assessment of different development inputs under the RSVY Scheme. Their study includes distribution of agricultural land under traditional land reforms measures as one of the development inputs. Their study finds that the distribution of land to the Lodhas was rarely taken up seriously as one of the major and fundamental tasks towards their socio-economic development, although in Narayangrah block the distribution of land to the Lodhas were found to be in better condition. Land distribution occupied only nine percent of all 13 types of development inputs. Their study also finds that other related development inputs like skill development training, plough, seed, manure, irrigation, pesticides etc. were largely ignored thus making very nominal effect in their livelihood development (Panda and Guha, 2013).

5. GAPS IN EXISTING LITERATURE

There is no such particular research on homestead plot allocation and its effect on socio-economic development of tribes in general and Lodha in particular. The study conducted by Rural Development Institute in 2001 in Karnataka (Hanstad*et al*, 2008)and West Bengal (Hanstad and Lokesh, 2002) can be viewed as a ground work for this research as their study was focused on identifying the benefits derived from homestead plots in general. It puts emphasis on calculating the optimum size for getting maximum economic benefits from homestead plots and its social and economic benefits regarding family income, food production, health and nutritional benefits in general. There was no reference to any particular land allocation programme or a particular segment of the society or a vulnerable group like Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes in this study.

Study conducted by International Food Policy and Research Institute in2014 (Santos*et al*, 2014) includes CDPA and NGNB both for their evaluation. The study was aimed at finding the linkage between homestead plot allocation programme and its impact on food security. It was based on experimental design and considered both CDPA and NGNB patta holders in general without any reference to any marginal social groups but women. The study put more emphasis on benefits accrued by women and its linkage with food security.

The study conducted by NCAS and Ekta Parishad (NCAS, 2002) in the context of Madhya Pradesh touches upon the issues of tribal landlessness, land alienation and examines the drawbacks of land

reforms programmes of that state in general. It does neither throw any light on solution side nor any mention of homestead plot allocation programme. Singharoy's(2004) study in the context of West Bengal put focus on tribal peasantry, not absolute landlessness among tribal. It further reviews the impact of land reforms initiatives of the state on the development of tribal community in general based on secondary data. Study of that particular three villages based on primary data was restricted to tribal cultivator households (peasantry) and examined their participation in development programmes and captures the effect of socio-cultural factors. It does not reflect much on landlessness among tribes and assess the impact of homestead plot allocation programme either.

Bhowmick (1985) mentions about the problems of the tribes and government programmes but without any study on the impact of the programmes. His work is more anthropological in nature giving emphasis on their origin, characteristic features, their lifestyle and culture including various social and economic problems. Study conducted by Panda and Guha (2013) considers agricultural land distribution as one of the development inputs, out of 13 type of development inputs envisaged under RSVY scheme; not primarily focusing on land allocation and its impact. Secondly, it does not take into account absolute landlessness and hence the focus was on agricultural land, not on homestead plots.

6. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Lack of availability of data on land may be the reason for not having much research work on land reforms or land allocation programme and particularly on tribal landlessness. A huge amount of time has already been invested for making the data available on this particular issue. No such study has been conducted so far on the role of homestead land allocation programme in the social and economic development of tribes in general and Lodha tribe in particular in the context of West Bengal. This study will help to understand the issues of landlessness among Lodha tribe in the present socio-cultural context, how far the homestead land allocation programme has been able to address the issues of landlessness among them and whether it has played any substantial role in their social and economic development. The findings of the study may help the policy makers to take more effective policy for reducing landlessness among Lodha tribe thus mitigating their vulnerability, and take up comprehensive measures for their social and economic development thus helping them breaking the cycle of poverty.

7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study, the researcher will try to explore the impact of homestead plot allocation programme, '*Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi'* (NGNB) on the socio-economic development of the Lodhas of West Bengal. The researcher has chosen to examine the land rights and socio-economic development rationales together because he proposes that these rationales are intertwined. In order to see how these rationales may be connected, it is important to better delineate the potential pathways from ownership of land through NGNB to socio-economic development. *First*, the researcher expects that land rights, or land ownership, should increase their socio-economic status or influence both inside and outside their society. Depending on how they use their land, land rights should also provide food, crops, fodder, and other resources to their family. *Second*, these resources provide a direct means of subsistence and also facilitate rearing of livestock, poultry birds and other livelihood activities. *Third*, land rights should also improve their economic situation by improving their access to credit and other government services and providing income through selling crops and other products or renting the

land or gaining bargaining power in the labour wage market.

The specific research questions of the study are:

I. What is the nature of landlessness among Lodha tribe in West Bengal?

II. What is the pattern of allocation of homestead plot (NGNB) among Lodhas in West Bengal?

III. What are the effects of homestead plot allocation programme (NGNB) on the socio-economic development of the Lodhas?

IV. How far the post-patta development initiatives or convergence services of other line departments have been able to contribute to social and economic development of Lodhas?

V. How Social Work intervention can help in effective implementation of homestead land allocation programme and contribute to socio-economic development of Lodha tribe in West Bengal.

8. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The broad objective of this study is to understand the relationship between tribal landlessness and the effects of homestead plot allocation programme (NGNB) in the socio-economic development of the Lodhas of West Bengal.

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:-

1. To study the nature of landlessness and pattern of allocation of homestead land (NGNB) among Lodhas in West Bengal.
2. To examine the nature and extent of distribution of other development inputs to Lodha NGNB beneficiaries through convergence component of the NGNB programme.
3. To assess the socio-economic development of Lodha households through this NGNB Programme.
4. To identify the Social Work interventions that could be undertaken for effective implementation of land allocation programme and socio-economic development of Lodhas.

9. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

9.1 Universe of the Study:

Under the NGNB Programme, total 2,19,373 land titles (patta) have been distributed in the state since inception in late 2011. Out of this number of land titles, an estimated 27,194(12.4%) number of land titles have been issued to tribal (Annexure-I). As per Census data 2011, there are total 1,08,707 Lodha population in the state including Kheria and Kharia. Most of the Lodha households are concentrated in Paschim Medinipur district including recently divided Jhargram district. As per District Human Development Report, 2011 there are total 15,282 Lodha households (60,206 Lodha populations) spread across 21 blocks of two districts with varying degree of concentration (Annexure-II). So, all Lodha households of the two districts namely, Paschim Medinipur and Jhargram (where there is highest concentration of Lodha tribes in the state) who received patta for homestead plots under the NGNB Programme will be the universe of the study.

9.2 Sampling:

Out of 15,282 Lodha households, 1,583 households have received patta under NGNB Programme who were identified as absolutely landless. List of all patta recipient households under the programme was collected from Land & Land Reforms Department of both the districts. From the available list, Lodha households have been identified. On the basis of that number, high concentration Lodha blocks where NGNB patta has been distributed have been identified (Annexure-III). A total of 320 (required sample size is 310 on the basis of Population Size: 1583, Confidence Level: 95%, Margin of Error: 5%) such Lodha households from 6 blocks of these two districts will be considered for data collection.

Six high Lodha concentrated blocks where highest numbers of NGNB pattas have been distributed, have been identified from two districts purposively. Lodhas living in Jhargram district are less agriculture oriented and more forest dependent whereas Lodhas in Paschim Medinipur district are relatively more integrated with mainstream society and adept in agriculture. So, three blocks from each district are taken into account. Hence, Binpur-II, Jhargram and Jamboni blocks from Jhargram district and Keshiary, Kharagpur-II and Narayangarh blocks from Paschim Medinipur district are selected for the study. In the next phase, villages (mouzas) are selected as per availability of the households in clusters of 10 households or more. List of such villages having more than 10 households in cluster have been prepared (Annexure-IV) and high concentration Lodha NGNB beneficiary villages will be selected from each six blocks. Since high concentration Lodha NGNB beneficiaries are available in these six blocks in varying number, so samples will be selected proportionately from each block. Thus, block wise sample size will be as follows.

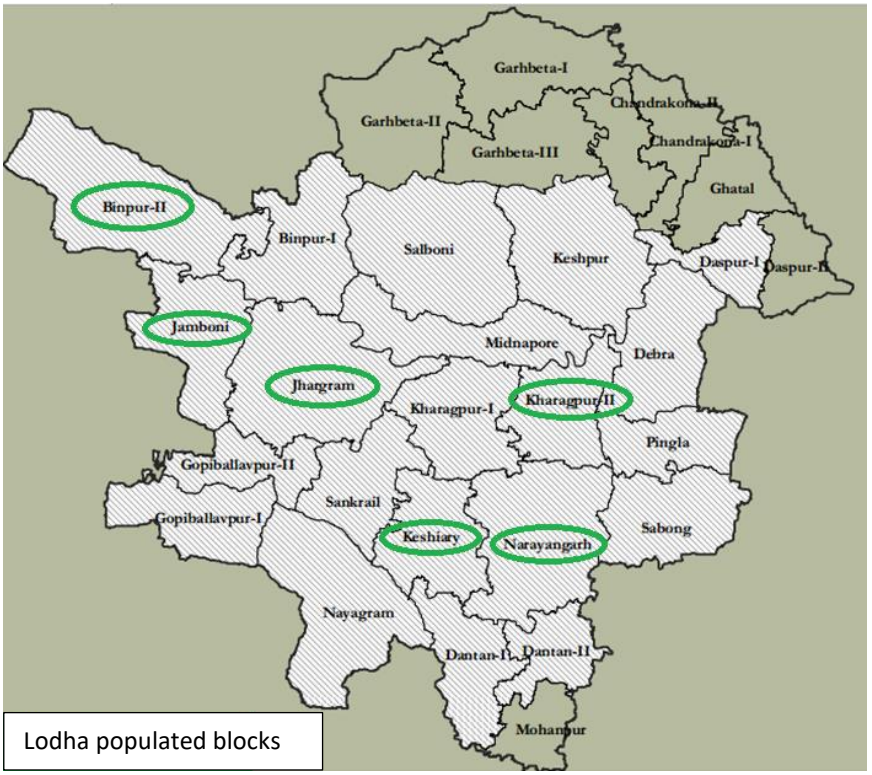
Table 2: Block Wise Selection of Samples

Sl. No.	Block	Total No. of Lodha NGNB Beneficiary	Proportionate Sample Size
1	Binpur-II	266	82
2	Jhargram	200	62
3	Kamboni	112	35
4	Keshiyari	182	56
5	Kharagpur-II	142	44
6	Narayangarh	133	41
Total		1035	**320**

(Source: Data collected from L&LR Deptt., Paschim Medinipur and Jhargram districts)

During village selection, high concentration Lodha NGNB beneficiary villages will be selected in descending order purposively until required numbers of respondents are available.

Figure 1: Map showing sample blocks from Lodha Populated Blocks in Paschim Medinipur and Jhargram Districts



(Source: PaschimMedinipur District Human Development Report-2011)

9.3 Research Design:

A mixed method research design will be followed and both the quantitative as well as qualitative data will be collected. Primary data will be collected through household survey from the respondent households. Certain qualitative data will be collected through Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Apart from that, in-depth interview will be conducted with key informants like village heads (formal or informal), Gram Panchayat, block and district level government officials for qualitative data collection. Additionally, required number of case studies from each block will be collected to capture the qualitative data. Different source of secondary data will also be utilized like previous studies, research papers, development reports, web based materials etc. for validating and authenticating the information.

9.4 Tools of Data Collection:

For the purpose of the study primary as well as secondary data will be used. Three kind of tools will be used for capturing primary data – (1) Interview Schedule – to be used for key respondents, (2) Semi-Structured Interview Schedule - for conducting FGD with primary respondents and in-depth interview with key informants like district and block level officials, community leaders and leaders from CSOs and (3) Interview Guide – for collecting case stories from the field keeping in view the objective of the study.

9.5 Data Analysis & Interpretations:

For the purpose of interpretation and analysis of data following techniques will be applied: -

1. Quantitative data: Quantitative data will be analyzed through SPSS Software.
2. Qualitative data: Suitable qualitative analysis will be taken into consideration keeping into view the objectives of the study.

10. CHAPTERIZATION:

After data interpretation and analysis, a study report will be prepared for publication. The present study "Socio-Economic Development of Landless Lodha Tribe: A Study of '*Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi*' Programme in West Bengal" will be divided into following chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction – giving basic concepts.
Chapter II: Review of Literature - will review the literature of the past studies and describe their findings and also delineate the relevance of the present study.
Chapter III: Research Design & Methodology - will discuss objective of the study, research methodology, research questions, sampling, sample frame, and the profile of the study area.
Chapter IV: Data Analysis – will investigate the nature and pattern of allocation of land in favour of Lodha tribe (and women) and socio-economic development of the Lodha tribe that has been accrued after receiving patta under NGNB Programme.
Chapter V: Summary of the Findings – will reflect on the findings of the study.
Chapter VI: Conclusion and Suggestions – will draw conclusion from the findings and offer some suggestions for more effectively implementation of such programmes in order to address landlessness among tribes and gear up their socio-economic development.
Appendix: Questionnaires and details of the respondents.
Bibliography: List of books, journals and periodicals etc. referred during the study and which may be helpful for further research.

11. TIME FRAME

Stage wise expected time frame is presented in the following table:

Activities	**Jan-June 2018**	**July-Dec 2018**	**Jan-June 2019**	**July-Dec 2019**
Stage-I: Research training, secondary data collection and literature review				
Stage-II: Developing and piloting tools to be used				
Stage-II: Primary data collection and data tabulation				
Stage-IV: Data analysis and Report writing				

12. ETHICAL ISSUES:

A. The data which will be collected for the present study will be kept confidential.
B. The participants will be engaged in the study with their full concern and after informing and explaining about the study.

13. ABBREVIATIONS USED:

CDPA	:	Cultivation and Dwelling Plot Allotment
CSO	:	Civil Society Organization
DHDR	:	District Human Development Report

FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
GoI	:	Government of India
GoWB	:	Government of West Bengal
IFPRI	:	International Food Policy and Research Institute
L&LR	:	Land and Land Reforms
LPLD	:	Land Purchase and Land Distribution
NCAS	:	National Centre for Advocacy Studies
NGNB	:	Nijo Griha Nijo Bhumi
NSSO	:	National Sample Survey Organization
PRI	:	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PVTG	:	Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group
RDI	:	Rural Development Institute
RoR	:	Record of Rights
RSVY	:	Rashtriya Sam VikasYojana
SC	:	Scheduled Caste
SECC	:	Socio Economic Caste Census
ST	:	Scheduled Tribe
USA	:	United States of America

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15. ANNEXURES:

Annexure-I

District Wise Patta Distribution (under NGNB) among different Social Categories

SI No.	Name of the Districts	No. of beneficiaries identified for NGNB from 2011	Total patta distributed from 2011	Social Categories of benefitted families					% Calculation of Social Category			
				SC	ST	Minorities	Others	Total	SC	ST	Minorities	Others
1	Bankura	6335	6000	3559	658	503	1280	**6000**	59.32	10.96	8.38	21.34
2	Barddhaman	37870	24057	11049	3991	3705	5312	**24057**	45.93	16.59	15.4	22.08
3	Birhhum	15069	14970	4458	1371	2506	6635	**14970**	29.78	9.16	16.74	44.32
4	Darjeelinq	16530	11058	5379	2697	982	2000	**11058**	48.64	24.39	8.88	18.09
5	Howrah	7670	3830	1083	299	1433	1015	**3830**	28.29	7.81	37.42	26.48
6	Hoogli	17194	7548	3406	1384	552	2206	**7548**	45.12	18.33	7.31	29.24
7	Jalpaiguri	11400	11400	4699	1948	1401	3352	**11400**	41.22	17.09	12.29	29.4
8	Coochbehar	12304	9568	5137	14	2775	1642	**9568**	53.69	0.15	29	17.16
9	Malda	22453	12082	3600	1205	3927	3350	**12082**	29.8	9.97	32.5	27.73
10	Paschim Medinipur	24540	20207	4955	5735	2150	7367	**20207**	24.52	28.38	10.64	36.46
11	Purba Medinipur	9762	9103	832	208	475	7588	**9103**	9.14	2.28	5.22	83.36
12	Murshidabad	10593	8053	1561	549	3708	2235	**8053**	19.38	6.82	46.05	27.75
13	Nadia	20778	18786	3333	325	1717	13411	**18786**	17.74	1.73	9.14	71.39
14	Purulia	11179	8822	3584	1348	508	3382	**8822**	40.63	15.28	5.76	38.33
15	North 24 Parganas	13294	6669	746	312	739	4872	**6669**	11.19	4.68	11.08	73.05
16	South 24	31629	25090	6087	1952	7883	9168	**25090**	24.26	7.78	31.42	36.54

	Parganas											
17	Dakshin Dinajpur	5266	5266	1348	957	709	2252	**5266**	25.6	18.17	13.46	42.77
18	Uttar Dinajpur	10370	10261	2908	640	3778	2935	**10261**	28.34	6.24	36.82	28.6
19	Alipurduar	6932	6603	1672	1601	549	2781	**6603**	25.32	24.25	8.31	42.12
	TOTAL	**291168**	**219373**	**69396**	**27194**	**40000**	**82783**	**219373**	**31.6**	**12.4**	**18.2**	**37.8**

(Source: Calculated from the data collected from Directorate of Land Records and Survey, Govt. of West Bengal)

Annexure-II:
Block Wise Distribution of Lodha Households in Paschim Medinipur and Jhargram Districts

Sl. No.	District	Block	No. of Mouza	No. of Lodha Households	Lodha Population
1	Paschim Medinipur	Kharagpur-I	45	1696	7019
2		Kharagpur-II	28	722	2821
3		Dantan-I	5	196	750
4		Dantan-II	3	66	273
5		Keshiary	15	1035	4312
6		Debra	18	935	4714
7		Sabang	11	679	2555
8		Narayangarh	55	3125	12099
9		Pingla	7	376	1230
10		Keshpur	7	183	644
11		Medinipur (Sadar)	28	780	3060
12		Salboni	12	213	873
13		Daspur-I	4	50	167
14	Jhargram	Binpur-I	8	359	1509
15		Binpur-II	60	770	3095
16		Nayagram	27	1090	4072
17		Gopiballavpur-I	2	85	274
18		Gopiballavpur-II	1	20	70
19		Jamboni	37	679	2585
20		Sankrail	6	235	948
21		Jhargram	91	1988	7136
TOTAL			**470**	**15282**	**60206**

(Source: District Human Development Report, 2011)

Annexure-III:
Block Wise Distribution of Lodha NGNB Beneficiaries

Sl. No.	District	Block	No. of Lodha NGNB Beneficiary Households
1	Jhargram	Jhargram	200
2		Jamboni	112

3		Binpur-I	31
4		Binpur-II	266
5		Gopiballavpur-I	75
6		Gopiballavpur-II	28
7		Sankrail	40
8		Nayagram	18
9	Paschim Medinipur	Sadar	32
10		Salboni	9
11		Keshpur	73
12		Kharagpur-I	49
13		Kharagpur-II	142
14		Keshiary	182
15		Narayangarh	133
16		Dantan-II	16
17		Pingla	54
18		Sabang	58
19		Debra	65
TOTAL			**1583**

(Source: District Land & Land Reforms Office, PaschimMedinipur and Jhargram)

Annexure-IV:
High Concentration Lodha NGNB Beneficiary Villages from Sample Blocks

SL. NO.	DISTRICT	BLOCK	GP	MOUZA (JL NO.)	NO. OF HH (in cluster)
1			Lodhasuli	Radhashyampur (650)	26
2			Ledabahara	Auligerya (912)	15
3				Giria (766)	37
4			Sapdhara	Kundaldihi (758)	10
5				Suabasa (350)	13
6			Radhanagar	Jaralata (355)	12
7				Tiakati (465)	10
8	Jhargram	Jhargram	Bandhgora	Dainmari (664)	17
					140
1			Lalbandh	Akhuabandha (101)	22
2			Kapgari	Hatiasuli (156)	27
3	Jhargram	Jamboni	Jamboni	Jamboni (194)	14
					63
1			Eargoda	Rajkusma (338)	18
2			Bhulaveda	Pataghra (35)	35
3				Dorra (170)	25
4				Kendapara (179)	11
5	Jhargram	Binpur-II	Sondapara	Garhpahar (182)	12

6			Belpahari	Sarsabasa (143)	10
7			Silda	Kalporasi (310)	23
8			Velaidiha	Bhararu (223)	13
					147
1				Khajurkuti (53)	50
2			3 No. GP	Santrapur (57)	12
3			1 No. GP	Mahisamura (41)	59
4	Paschim Medinipur	Keshiyari	5 No. GP	Kulboni (87)	10
					131
1				Sankoa (398)	36
2				Sanmoninathpur-350	25
3			Sankoa	Amarswarpur,399	12
4				Syamsundarpur ,613	10
5			Palshya	Koita,651	28
6	Paschim Medinipur	Kharagpur-II	Kaliara-I	BarBasantapur,539	13
					124
1			7 No. GP	Tarafbarpand-281	13
2			Hemchandra	Muradchak-728	17
3				Kunarpur (572)	22
4				Parulda (574)	15
5	Paschim Medinipur	Narayangarh	Kunarpur	Kushda (573)	13
					80

(Source: Calculated from the data collected from L&LR Department of Paschim Medinipur and Jhargram Districts)

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